

CLAIMS:

1. A data transfer system comprising: a sender facility (10); a receiver facility (12) and a key facility (14); the sender facility (10) having means for
5 encrypting data for the intended recipient, means for splitting the data into encrypted parts such that no part is decryptable on its own, means for encrypting at least one of the parts for a third party to produce a further encrypted part, means for combining the further encrypted part and the remaining encrypted part to produce a data block and means for sending the
10 data block, the receiver facility (12) having means for receiving the data block, means for requesting decryption of the further encrypted part by the key facility (14) which has means for decrypting the further encrypted part and means for sending it to the receiver facility (12) and the receiver facility (12) also having means for decrypting the encrypted part and the decrypted further encrypted part provided by the key facility (14).
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2. A system as claimed in claim 1 in which the sender facility (10) includes means for signing the data block.
- 20 3. A system as claimed in claim 1 or 2 in which the means for sending at the sender facility (10) are arranged to send the data block to the key facility (14) and the key facility (14) includes means for receiving the data block and forwarding the said block to the receiver facility (12).
- 25 4. A system as claimed in claim 3 in which the key facility (14) further includes means for logging receipt of the data block.

5. A system as claimed in claim 1 or 2 in which the means for sending at the sender facility (10) are arranged to send the data block to the receiver facility (12) and the receiver facility (12) includes means for receiving the data block.

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6. A system as claimed in claim 5 in which the key facility (14) further includes means for logging receipt of the further encrypted part.

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7. A system as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6 in which the key facility (14) includes means for logging receipt of the request for decryption of the further encrypted part as proof of delivery of the block to the receiver facility (12).

8. A system as claimed in claim 7 in which the sender facility (10) includes means for requesting proof of delivery information from the key facility (14).